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ABSTRACT

The Documentation Conference on Developmental Communication Resource Materials was held in October 1970 to help the Communication Institute at the East-West Center to define needs for documentation work in Asia and the Pacific, and the means by which to meet part of those needs. This report describes discussions of one of the Communication Institute's primary objectives--building a collection of knowledge about the use of communication in development that consists of research findings, cases, records, and related materials which are continuously updated, abstracted, indexed, evaluated, and disseminated. The results of the conference are summarized according to its agenda; major points include needs for particular materials, cultural factors which have to be taken into account in document collection and dissemination, and the present state of documentation in Asia. The plan of action for document collection is then detailed, comprising the major portion of the report. (SH)

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East West Communication Institute

DEVELOPMENTAL COMMUNICATION RESOURCE MATERIALS

Report on

Documentation Conference on Developmental Communication Resource Materials

October 26 - 29, 1970
EAST-WEST CENTER
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822

EM 010 324

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Report on

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The Documentation Conference on Developmental Communication Resource Materials was called in October 1970 to help the Communication Institute at the East-West Center to define the needs for documentation work in Asia and the Pacific and the means by which to meet at least part of those needs.

The Communication Institute is building a resource of knowledge in the use of communication in development as one of its primary objectives, and the conference was a major step in developing such a collection. The Document Collection is for use of scholars, policy-makers and communication specialists of East and West, and especially by East-West Center students, trainees, Senior fellows and staff. The Collection consists of research findings, cases, and visual, auditory and written records, and related materials, which are continuously updated, abstracted, indexed and evaluated and disseminated. More specifically, the Documentation Conference agenda consisted of the following:

1. What are the needs for developmental communication materials in Asia, the Pacific and the United States? What should a collector concentrate on first, second, and so forth? What are the needs of particular programs--population, agriculture, public health, etc.?

2. Where are the needed materials, and how should they be collected? What institutions should do what in collecting? How should vernacular material be collected?

3. What should be done with the material once collected? What guides should there be for abstracting, summarizing, translating, classification, bibliographies, evaluation, storage and retrieval?

4. What form should dissemination take? What kind of institution and individual dissemination is needed and practical?

The conference spent two days discussing the various points on the agenda, and on the final day of the conference, put together a plan of action, under the direction of Dr. Wilbur Schramm. This summary will follow the outline of the conference, with the discussion and points on the agenda items, and then the plan--with its alternatives. Generally, particular ideas are not attributed to any one person, and certainly not everyone at the conference would subscribe to all the points below. There seemed to be wide consensus on practically every point, however. The rapporteur tried to present the sense of the conference on the various points and proposals, and the fault obviously rests with him if points were missed or the wrong emphasis given. The conference was not one where resolutions were presented and plans of action put to votes--it was to advise and assist the Communication Institute, and the points below present a wide and exciting promise for the Document Collection.

The conference focused the first two days on the needs for a document collection in the use of communication in economic and social development

programs in Asia and the Pacific, the cultural factors which influence both development communication and collection of documents, the present state of documentation, and the actual collection of such materials. Processing and dissemination were also examined.

Basic to all the discussion is the question of how cooperation between other centers and institutes can be worked out.

Here are some of the main points made under the needs:

1. The communication researcher and practitioner in Asia is relatively isolated professionally, and has need of outside support and contacts.

2. There is some research being done in Asia in developmental communication but there is a lack of channels for dissemination, and much of what is being done is being "lost."

3. Administrators must allocate use of communication resources with little knowledge of theory or practice in the communication media. But many administrators are open to such information and some are actively seeking it.

4. There are gaps between researchers, between researchers and practitioners, between researchers and administrators, and between administrators and practitioners.

5. The three main components or users of developmental communication resource materials are researchers, administrators and practioners.

6. The Document Center can play a liaison role by bringing researchers together, running training courses for practitioners, and helping to avoid duplication of efforts, and helping to find assistance for those needing communication help.

7. Administrators need quick, easy to understand reports. They don't have time to read a volume--more likely a page or two.

8. There is a need for basic data on communication and media in Asia, statistical and descriptive.

9. The greatest need in developmental communication resource material is for fugitive material, or material in the gray area. This, briefly, is material not under normal bibliographic controls--unpublished material of very recent origin.

10. Material needed on face-to-face communication as well as mass media communication.

11. There is a need for making available effective research methodology.

12. There is a need to gather material that will be useful in helping to improve the mass media's effort in development.

13. Resource materials, in addition to research studies, are needed.

14. Different countries at different levels have different needs for resource materials.

15. There is a need to determine if findings in one culture apply in another culture.

16. Development of case studies are paramount in helping the practitioner.

17. Many people simply do not know how to get the information they need in Asia.

18. There is a need to determine what behavior or patterns we seek to influence through the use of communication, and to whom that communication should be directed.

19. There is a need to understand the culture of modern bureaucracy, and this is particularly necessary in developing countries.

20. Efforts should be made to close the lag between completion of a study and publication and dissemination of the results. The lag now is two, three or more years.

Cultural Factors

Cultural factors obviously have to be considered in every phase of document collection and dissemination. Here are some of the points made during the discussion of cultural factors:

1. Effective communication in one culture is not necessarily effective in another culture--i.e., a case study in one culture might be of limited value in another cultural setting.

2. Culture is just there, it is not a barrier to communication or collection of resource material.

3. There are generation gaps and education gaps in developmental communication.

4. The importance of personal communication is great in decision-making.

5. The way to get change through the use of communication is to "get going" with the culture, not try to fight it head-on.

6. To reach between cultures, there is a need for a place to look at communication materials from all around. A book of posters in a particular development area, for example, might be effective.

7. Assumptions bureaucrats make are often wrong. Farmers are often defined as stupid and ignorant, for example, and bureaucracy shapes its communication to farmers on that basis.

Present State of Documentation

The possibilities for documentation have apparently been improving over the past several years in Asia. Here are some of the points made during the discussions on the present state of documentation:

1. Five years ago there was a serious lack of information on the communication media in Asia but there is now emerging more and more information on the mass media.

2. It is possible to collect developmental communication resource material--as distinct from research studies--now available. This includes posters, pamphlets, brochures, tapes, slides, etc.

4. Editing of materials is a problem--there are not enough skilled editors, which slows preparation and dissemination of materials.

Collection is one of the crucial functions of a Document Collection--without the material, what good is it? Some of the many points made at the conference during the discussion on collection were:

1. Collection of material in the use of communication in development programs, especially fugitive material, is very difficult. A good deal of detective work is required.

2. The material sought for developmental communication is not in normal bibliographic or library channels; it is hard to locate and to secure.

3. The East-West Center over the past decade and other institutions have been attempting collection in this area. It is not an entirely new field, but it is one that has not shown great success in the past.

4. Existing sources for collection purposes include indexes, abstracts, documentation systems or centers, directories, local resource persons, vernacular material, raw data, campaign materials, personal visits to institutions, newsletters, journals, annual reports, conference programs, accessions lists, etc.

5. Some collection should be by request, with a continuing list made of requested or needed materials from all sources.

6. A list of correspondents needs to be developed.

7. It is better to offer reciprocal services than retainers, to insure a continuing flow of material. Institutional arrangements are best, to avoid the inevitable gaps created by turnover in personnel.

8. The expenses for collection, such as postage, transportation, copying, etc., should be paid where appropriate.

9. There is an immediate need to identify the sources of the materials sought for the collection.

10. The Document Collection, any document collection agency, cannot collect everything. There has to be a principle of selectivity in what is collected, and a division of responsibility.

11. Collection must be divided among cooperating institutions. The purpose of collections can be reduced to the more specific institutions need if there is wide cooperation.

12. Collection should be restricted to the use of communication in economic and social development.

13. No "private stuff" should be collected. Collection should stay in official or semi-official channels, and stay in the gray or fugitive area.

14. Cooperating institutions should screen material and pass on what is relevant to overall collection purposes.

15. A representative "on the spot" can screen material for the Center. This can save a good deal of time, and produce more relevant material in the collection.

The Collection Plan

The final day of the conference concentrated on drawing a plan of action for the Document Collection. Dr. Wilbur Schramm, chairman of the final session, put together a plan under eight topics, which are detailed below. Also during this session, as in earlier ones, the basic relationship between the East-West Center and the Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre in Singapore was thoroughly discussed by the secretary general of AMIC, Dr. Y.V. Lakshmana Rao, and the other participants, including Communication Institute staff. This sense of cooperation, a part of the Schramm plan, is at the heart of any successful document collection, and is also discussed in detail below.

The Schramm plan was presented for discussion under eight headings:

1. What to collect
2. How to collect
3. Abstracts
4. Year book
5. Cooperation
6. Other audiences
7. Principles of selectivity
8. Special problems

Dr. Schramm made the point that it is important to get the job done, and that it is not so important who does it. No one institution can do it all, and even all of those at the conference couldn't do it all. Each person and institution should do what he does best at every stage of the collection process. Selectivity has to govern at all stages. All of the material could not be collected even if that was desired. There is a great mass of information on Asia and the Pacific on the topic--findings, materials, statistics, etc.--and there are now two centers making special efforts in this field, the East-West Communication Institute and AMIC. In addition, there are a number of research

and training centers (such as in the Philippines and Japan) that do important documentation work. There are numerous resources elsewhere, such as UNESCO regional centers.

What to Collect

Three basic kinds of resource materials should be collected:

1. research findings
2. policy on research
3. program materials

The point was made that all centers should collect everything but that some centers, such as AMIC, will want to concentrate on specific materials. In AMIC's case, this would be on material of interest to practitioners and administrators. And the Communication Institute, while needing to collect material for practitioners and administrators, could concentrate heavily on research findings and related materials. Both centers will exchange holdings. It was suggested that the Communication Institute take the responsibility for feeding in long lines--to UNESCO, ERIC--and feed to AMIC and/or other parts of Asia from the long line sources.

How to Collect

Points made concerning collecting included:

1. There should be reciprocal cooperation between the centers and field institutions.
2. There should be cooperation with UNESCO quid pro quo.
3. A certain number of field correspondents will be needed.
4. Staff members will have to take one or two trips through the area a year.

Material has to be collected from outside the geographic areas and has to get beyond the dream state. Networks of correspondents are needed as well as a world network composed of regional centers, such as AMIC, and local centers. These groupings could be geographic and by language areas. Many references were made to two Unesco reports dealing with communication research documentation.

Collection should be on a cooperative and coordinated basis, such as exchange of abstracts and annotated bibliographies. The idea is to tell people in the field what's available and refer them to the appropriate document centers. A list of priorities was suggested, and again the Unesco priorities were discussed.

a) The collection of research material

b) Abstraction and description

c) Creation of thesauri in major languages

d) Interchange of classifications, descriptions and abstracts between centres

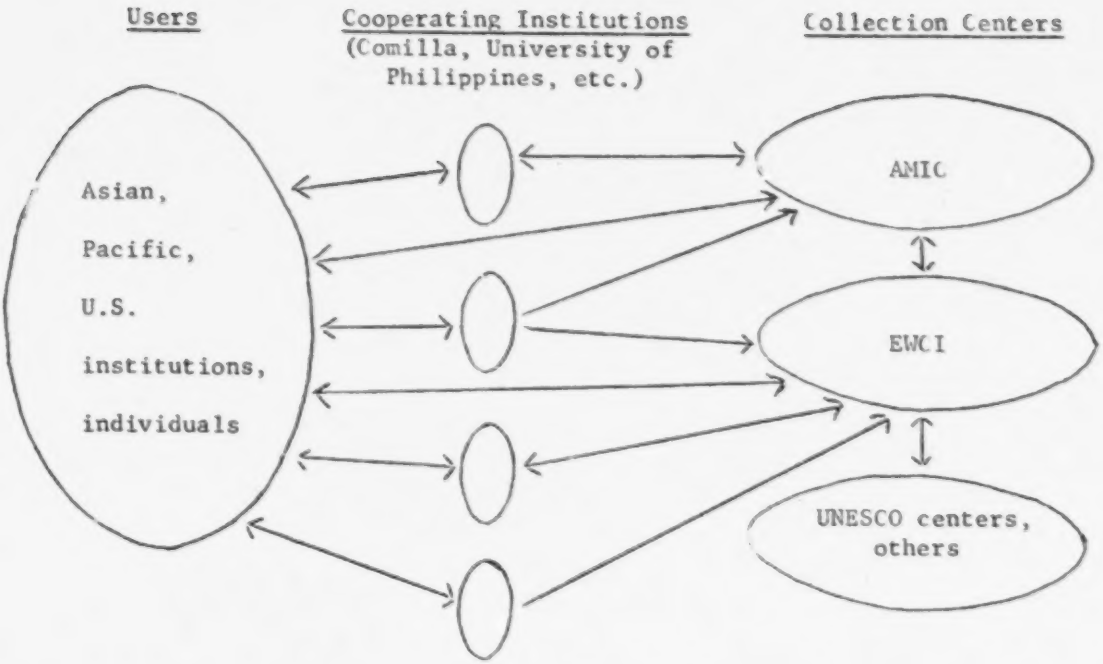
e) Provision of reproductions of specific papers, etc., on demand

f) Cross-processing of thesauri to establish equivalence of terminology.

Each center can collect in its own special way to serve its region. Individual flexibility is needed. Minimum needs for collection centers include the ability to reproduce material, the presence of specialists, and storage and retrieval facilities. The point was made that the collection network is not a descending pyramid but a high voltage line around the world. The centers should be sure to be plugged in and get what they want.

Schramm noted that the EWC-AMIC relations were most important to collection plans and document centers on communication.

Schramm presented a drawing showing how collection and dissemination could be arranged cooperatively, with "wholesalers" such as Unesco, EWCI and other regional type centers, and retailers being the more local or national centers that now are active in communication documentation. AMIC was seen as both a wholesaler and a retailer, with direct links to individual users, while EWCI was seen as dealing most of the time in a wholesale capacity with local centers, with the local centers serving the retailing function to individual users.



Abstracts

Abstracts would be one of the main products of the Documentation Collection. Schramm made the point that the East-West Center should have primary responsibility in abstracts because the needed skills and talents are readily available at the Center and University of Hawaii.

These other points were made:

1. A quarterly list of abstracts should be prepared and circulated, so institutions and others can order what they want as needed.

2. The abstracts would be available on a clearing-house basis, on demand for a cost-only fee.

3. Eventually, the collection will have to go to microfiche.

4. Institutions or cooperating individuals will get the abstract service free, with a service fee for others.

A brief summary of the documents or series of related documents may be more helpful than an abstract. Abstracts are designed to help users, and should be done with what the cooperating institutes need and want. With the development of documentation centers, there is no reason why every country in the region can't have every abstract it needs, and a quick link back to the center to circulate its work.

Yearbook

The suggestion was made that EWCI pull together five to twelve long summary articles on the present state of the art in key areas (i.e., appeals in family planning, low cost alternatives to television, etc.).

A yearbook was suggested instead of a journal. Cooperating institutes would get free copies, and others could pay. The point was raised whether all the summaries would be prepared at the Communication Institute, or spread around.

The yearbook was characterized as perhaps being the most important publication for the greatest numbers of people, and it should be started as soon as practical. Articles could be done on a commission basis. Several alternatives to a yearbook were suggested: articles could be issued as they are prepared, and a special publication on a particular topic could be used, articles could be issued one at a time as ready, and later put in a binding as a collection.

What level should the yearbook aim at? Researcher, theoretical and methodological, or administrator or practitioner? It was suggested that it be written for the person making decisions on allocation of resources and that the publication could thereby help those working on the projects by making their arguments for them. Such a publication could do a more thorough job of assemblying material than individual project people could do. It was suggested that the publication could be written at more than one level. Some examples of the types of articles for such a publication were family planning appeals in India and consistency theory for research theoreticians.

Some felt, however, that administrators won't read such a publication and that it might be more valuable to researchers, and that it might serve as a communication link among researchers. It was noted that practitioners and researchers don't communicate with each other, and that the publication might help link them.

Occasional papers--sent to the right audience--were suggested, as was the need to remain flexible on publications. Document centers can be meeting places for practitioners and researchers but they can't do everything.

Cooperation

Great emphasis was given to the need to cooperate in document collection. Success depends on cooperating institutes. There should be a more detailed plan on how to go about collection to sustain interest of cooperating institutes. The institutes have their own business-this is new business for them.

Conferences every two or three years for cooperating institutes was suggested, along with small group meetings of cooperators in Asia. To help cooperators work on the document collection, it was suggested that there should be some kind of formal group to tie cooperating institutes and people closer together, and tie in research and training plans.

Exchange of materials was considered one of the prime means of securing and maintaining cooperation.

Cooperation will be needed in devising subject headings for the document collection. Such a list of headings will be circulated by EWCI and revised as appropriate. Also, a list of sources of material can be circulated and new sources added, and then the sources could be divided up with AMIC to avoid duplication. Questions were asked on how current the collection should be--is a three to six month lag between report and circulation realistic? And should all centers store all materials? Once the collections are under way, this question will be easier to answer, and the decision on who should store what can be made.

As an initial step to cooperation and collection, it was suggested that an inventory be made of all the communication people in the various organizations involved in Asia, as well as the more obvious communication-related research and educational institutes. A first step in a collection center will be to get the names and addresses of all the communication-related people in the areas of interest.

Other Audiences

In servicing other audiences, it was recommended that the document collection furnish abstracts widely, free in some places. Centers could reproduce documents and yearbook or other publications at cost. It was estimated that there are 2,000 other users of communication documentation materials.

Principle of Selectivity

Decisions have to made on what to send from cooperating institutions to centers and from center to center. Decisions have to be made on what to abstract, what to translate, what to summarize, what to send to users, and on what to send to Unesco and other outside centers.

The main point here is that it would be impossible to collect everything, that decisions have to be made constantly on what is of the most importance in every step of the document collection centers' work.

Special Problems

Language and translations are a continuing problem in a document collection. Answers to those questions will have to be worked out over time. AMIC has translation funds and skills, and could be expected to make a major effort in this area. Translation for abstracts is needed, although only rarely would an entire document be translated. It is particularly necessary to avoid duplication in translations and language work, and this has to be worked out by negotiation and understanding.

Authors of articles not in English could be asked to translate the abstract into English. Translation of abstracts by cooperating institutes in various countries might be the most practical. In any case, entire texts can't be translated in any numbers.

Dr. V.Y.L. Rao, secretary general of AMIC, discussed in length the role he envisions for AMIC in cooperation, collection and dissemination. He noted that AMIC-EWCI do not have an exclusive preserve on any or all parts of Asia, and that each institution has its own needs. But there can be a division of functions that is useful to both institutions and others. AMIC welcomes anyone who comes anytime for anything, Rao said. He noted that if you depend on someone else to do your collection or dissemination, they may not do it. Details of the overall Collection can be discussed in smaller groups by representatives of institutions now identified as involved in communication research. He noted that AMIC is aimed primarily toward decision-makers and practitioners, and that research materials will be used to assist training. AMIC will disseminate to Asian administrator and practitioners, and looks to EWCI to distribute to researchers, since EWCI has more specialists available in research. An Asian institution can communicate in the language of Asian administrators, Rao said, and AMIC might do a better job of that than EWCI.

Rao said an automatic exchange of materials should be worked out, with smaller institutions in documentation sending material automatically to one or both centers, and being assured that such material will be automatically sent to others. That is, a cooperating institute can send one copy of a document to one of the centers, and then the center can serve as a clearing-house for other requests for that document.

Rao noted that AMIC can't collect all the communication documents in Asia, and that EWCI must collect what it wants.

Schramm recommended that EWCI draft a proposed operational plan for the collection and dissemination of materials--perhaps with a central group called the Council on Communication Research--and disseminate it internally to all cooperating institutes for comment and revision.

Dr. R. Lyle Webster, director of the East-West Communication Institute, closed the conference with a review of the Schramm plan and other matters.

Webster said EWCI is committed to serve administrators and practitioners in Asia, too, as is AMIC, as well as researchers. Communication materials, as distinct from research studies, were given an important place in the EWCI collection. Collection of materials will have to be cooperative, and can be worked out. A trip a year for collection is a good idea. The abstracting aspect doesn't seem to present a big problem, and, on the yearbook idea, EWCI may issue its papers one at a time. Developing audiences or users for the material can be taken slowly, with EWCI feeling its way. The East-West Center already has a network of correspondents, built up over the first 10 years of its existence, and EWCI will draw on the network and experience for its document collection. Both AMIC and EWCI will be working in translations--EWCI is already involved in translating Japanese communication research titles and in some cases abstracting studies.

Webster noted that when EWCI first became interested in communication documentation, there appeared to be few institutions active with such collections. At the conference, EWCI discovered many more institutes cropping up with an interest in documentation.

This doesn't mean, however, that there will be nothing for EWCI to do. On the contrary, the task still looks staggering, he said. EWCI is finding a lot of help, and will draw up an organizational plan and begin on the other matters of cooperation discussed at the conference.

ATS-1 Educational Radio

Dr. Huber Ellingsworth, an observer at the conference, described the potential of the ATS-1 satellite over the Pacific. Part of the satellite's capacity is reserved for educational radio use, and the University of Hawaii and others are developing plans for its use. It will permit the linking of universities in the Pacific for voice transmission, including back-and-forth conference calls, and will have teletype capacity. This would mean possible teletype links between EWCI in Honolulu and AMIC in Singapore, at a very low cost, and has obvious implications for the document collections. Ellingsworth, evaluation officer for the Pacific Satellite Service, as it is called, asked if the conference would generally support such an educational radio effort, and the conference members indicated they would.

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THE EAST-WEST CENTER—formally known as "The Center for Cultural and Technical Interchange between East and West"—was established in Hawaii by the United States Congress in 1960. As a national educational institution in cooperation with the University of Hawaii, the Center's mandated goal is "to promote better relations and understanding between the United States and the nations of Asia and the Pacific through cooperative study, training and research."

Each year about 1,000 degree students, research-minded Fellows and nondegree students, including those in technological development and training programs at the mid-career level, come from more than 35 countries and territories to study and work together at the East-West Center. They are supported by federal scholarships and grants, supplemented in some fields by contributions from Asian/Pacific governments and private foundations. Several hundred more men and women receive training annually at field workshops and refresher courses conducted in the Asian/Pacific area by East-West Center instructional teams co-sponsored by local governments and agencies.

A fundamental aim of all East-West Center programs is to foster understanding and mutual respect among people from differing cultures working together in seeking solutions to common problems. The Center draws on the resources of U.S. mainland universities, and Asian/Pacific educational and governmental institutions as well as organizations in the multicultural State of Hawaii.

Center programs are conducted by the East-West Communication Institute, the East-West Culture Learning Institute, the East-West Food Institute, the East-West Population Institute, and the East-West Technology and Development Institute. Open Grants provide scope for flexibility and innovation.